SENIORS ADVISORY COUNCIL FOR ALBERTA

Annual Report
2007-2008

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VISION

To increase the recognition of seniors as one of Alberta's most valuable resources.

MISSION

Consult with seniors and seniors' organizations to make recommendations and provide advice to the Minister of Seniors and Community Supports regarding their work.

VALUES

The Seniors Advisory Council for Alberta, as a communication link between the Government of Alberta and our senior citizens, represents them with integrity, accountability and respect. Through collaboration, the council strives to assist seniors to live life to the fullest.

MANDATE

The Seniors Advisory Council for Alberta serves as a communication link between Alberta's seniors and the Government of Alberta. The council consults with seniors and also provides information to seniors and government. Through collaboration, the council strives to assist seniors to live life to the fullest.

Chair's Executive Summary

On behalf of the Seniors Advisory Council for Alberta, I am pleased to submit this report on the council's activities and accomplishments from April 1, 2007 to March 31, 2008.

The council engaged in a full slate of community events and meetings, including:

- Hosting public consultations in Fort Macleod;
- Touring seniors' facilities in the Fort Macleod and Fort McMurray regions;
- Receiving presentations on accommodation standards and licensing, elder abuse and patient safety;
- Developing three publications;
- Supporting province-wide celebration of Seniors' Week in 2007 and planning for Seniors' Week in 2008; and
- Attending 133 events, meetings and conferences in 42 communities

The year also saw the council focus on improving its effectiveness as a link between Alberta seniors and our provincial government. The council adopted several new strategies in its business plan to improve its effectiveness, expand its areas of involvement and increase its credibility on issues of interest to Alberta's seniors. These strategies have led to the formation of ad hoc committees in several areas of specific interest to seniors, identification of national and international websites with information that can be applied to Alberta and improved communication regarding the council's work and its advice to government.

Changes to the board's membership also occurred. I would like to thank Dr. David Belcher and Dr. Brad Hagen, who both finished their terms in the spring of 2007, and to Maureen Hemingway Schloss, who resigned from Council, for the many contributions they made to the council and to seniors over the past few years. And I welcome new members Diana Anderson, Rosemarie Biggs and Bev Homeniuk, who each bring extensive professional and volunteer experience with seniors to our work.

Alberta's seniors continue to play a vital role in the development and enrichment of our province. As a council, we are committed to helping seniors live their lives to the fullest, listening to their views and bringing their needs, ideas and activities forward to the provincial government. It's our contribution to building healthy and vibrant communities across Alberta.

George VanderBurg, MLA
Chair

Key Challenges, Observations and Advice

As a communication link between the Government of Alberta and our provinces' senior citizens, the council hears about the major challenges facing our aging population as well as community solutions that are working well. Based on what it hears, the council gives advice to the Government of Alberta, through the Minister of Seniors and Community Supports, with the goal of improving the quality of life of Alberta seniors.

This section of the annual report summarizes the advice that the council drafted in response to challenges and solutions that seniors and seniors' service providers raised during the past year. The advice relates to health and housing, ambulance services, education and communications, transportation, continuing care facilities in Fort McMurray and funding for seniors' centres.

The Seniors Advisory Council of Alberta submits the following advice to government through the Minister of Seniors and Community Supports.

HEALTH AND HOUSING

It is important that seniors' families be better informed and that regional health authorities teach families about managing expectations, so as not to put pressures on the system. This is presently offered to those diagnosed with cancer, diabetes, etc., and extending this service to seniors' families would help the patient, help the family and save the government money. Some facilities offer a brief orientation.

Therefore, it is suggested that the Minister of Seniors and Community Supports work with the Minister of Health and Wellness to encourage the regional health authorities to develop educational opportunities for the public on the principles of care in a long-term care setting and encourage individuals placing someone in long-term care to participate in these opportunities.

Enhanced lodge services, such as dementia care, can reduce hospital stays.

Therefore, the Minister of Seniors and Community Supports is encouraged to work with the Minister of Municipal Affairs and Housing and the Minister of Health and Wellness to fund additional seniors' housing spaces to fill the gap in service levels left between lodge services and assisted living facility services.

The life-time limit for home repairs in the Special Need Assistance program should reflect the current increase of home repair costs.

Therefore, the Minister of Seniors and Community Supports is encouraged to increase the life-time limit for home repairs in the Special Needs Assistance for Seniors program to $15,000.

Staffing continues to be a problem in long term care and designated living facilities.

The Minister of Seniors and Community Supports is encouraged to recommend to the Minister of Health and Wellness that he consider increasing funding to support the recruitment and retention of staff in seniors' housing facilities.

FUNDING

When Health and Wellness gives money to regional health authorities, they give a disproportionate amount to acute care than to long-term care.

Therefore, the Minister of Seniors and Community Supports is encouraged to request the Minister of Health and Wellness review the policies of regional health authorities relating to the allocation of resources, to ensure that funding increases to designated assisted living and long-term care facilities are proportionate to the increases to that of acute care funding.

When an individual lives in long-term care, all medication costs are waived, including any co-payment amount.

Therfore, the Minister of Seniors and Community Supports is encouraged to discuss with the Minister of Health and Wellness the development of a program for the payment of medications and medical supplies for low to moderate income seniors who benefit from remaining at home.

INTERAGENCY AMBULANCE

Seniors may not be requesting ambulance services when they are medically necessary because they are confused about the rules for coverage. This may lead to delays in proper diagnosis and treatment, which may result in longer hospital stays, increased need for health services and an increase in associated health care expenditures.

The current Coverage for Seniors program does not cover ground transportation for seniors who could be transported by other means. Nor does it cover the cost of non-medical transport, which includes circumstances where patients are medically stable yet require special needs transportation when going to a hospital for medical testing, chemotherapy or dialysis. In many areas of Alberta, there are limited transportation options beyond ambulance services.

Therefore, the Minister of Seniors and Community Supports is encouraged to discuss with the Minister of Health and Wellness the lack of clear communication by Alberta Blue Cross surrounding ambulance and inter-facility ambulance charges.

In addition, the Minister of Seniors and Community Supports is encouraged to raise the issue of the lack of Blue Cross insurance for seniors coverage for non-emergency medical transport, including medically stable patients who may require special needs transportation (e.g., stretcher) to hospital for chemotherapy, dialysis or diagnostic testing, with the Minister of Health and Wellness.

Also, the Minister of Seniors and Community Supports is encouraged to request that the Minister of Health and Wellness study the merits of licensing special needs non-emergency transportation, under the Licensing and Ambulance Maintenance Regulation Act.

EDUCATION AND COMMUNICATION

Collaboration is the key to helping seniors live life to the fullest, and an integrated response to seniors' needs, developed at the local level, is a priority. As noted on page 58 of *Alberta For All Ages: Directions for the Future*, the use of shared resources and information among community organizations and agencies, regional health authorities and all levels of government should be encouraged and supported to reduce duplication, increase efficiencies and maximize benefits for everyone involved. Service providers should share the mechanics and impact of community success stories.

Therefore, the Minister of Seniors and Community Supports is encouraged to consider the development of an on-line provincial resource database for seniors service providers which would gather and share successful and innovative program ideas.

TRANSPORTATION

Communities and family members assist whenever possible with the transportation needs of seniors. Council members are frequently made aware of great differences in the levels of transportation services available to seniors in various Alberta communities and connecting rural areas with their nearest urban centres. The lack of sustainable, accessible and affordable transportation is a barrier to seniors using needed services and programs, such as medical and dental, recreational and social opportunities. This contributes to their isolation, causing a range of other health related needs and further burdening our already strained social and health systems.

Therefore the Minister of Seniors and Community Supports is encouraged to investigate the longstanding and growing issue in both rural and urban areas of sustainable, affordable and accessible transportation for seniors, including seniors with developmental disabilities.

FORT MCMURRAY

There is overwhelming support for a stand-alone continuing care facility in the Fort McMurray region, to meet the needs of seniors and to free up acute care space within the Northern Lights Regional Health Centre.

Therefore, the Minister of Seniors and Community Supports is encouraged to talk with the Ministers of Health and Wellness and Infrastructure and Transportation to advance discussions on the development of a long-term care facility in Fort McMurray. Appropriate budget should be allocated for the siting and construction of a 50- to 70-bed continuing care centre, and the concomitant support of medical and social services. The facility could be designed so that it could be expanded to 115 beds, as the need arises.

SENIORS' CENTRES FUNDING

The Seniors Advisory Council for Alberta and the Alberta Council on Aging consulted seniors' centres across the province about their financial status in 2006 – 2007. The Minister of Seniors and Community Supports received a report, containing the following recommendations, this year. The report is available online at www.seniors.gov.ab.ca/services_resources/advisory_council/reports.asp#FundingReports.

THAT the Minister of Seniors and Community Supports ensure that the ministry create an overview information piece on all of the provincial funding programs relevant to seniors' centres, and that this information be included in the relevant department publications and posted online.

THAT the Minister of Seniors and Community Supports work with colleagues in the legislature to ensure that the new Community Spirit Program for Charitable Giving be designed so that seniors' centres that receive donations would be eligible to apply for matching funds from the Community Spirit Fund to help cover their operating costs.

THAT the Minister of Seniors and Community Supports advocate to Cabinet colleagues for the provision of matching community program and specified operational funding on a yearly basis for seniors' centres in Alberta, through an adjustment to the lottery funding granting process.

The financial status of seniors' centres across the province varies tremendously. Those experiencing financial difficulties face a wide range of challenges. Operational funding is a very important resource for seniors' centres and clubs. Lack of funding can result in a decline in quality of lifestyle, loss of community goodwill and fewer volunteers.

The actions that would have the most impact and reap the greatest benefits across the province are: ensuring all seniors' centres are aware of all potential sources of financial support; and helping seniors' centres with their rising, but varied, operational costs.

THAT the Minister of Seniors and Community Supports discuss with the Minister of Tourism, Parks, Recreation and Culture an amendment to the Community Initiatives Program to exempt Seniors' Centres from the current program parameters, and allow them to apply for one non-matching grant of up to no more than $5,000 per year, to assist with operational costs, such as utility costs.

This recommendation is in addition to the ones that arose from the Seniors' Centres Study, and recognizes the specific benefit that these centres would gain from assistance with annual utility costs.

Consultations, Tours and Presentations

Members of the Seniors Advisory Council for Alberta share information and gather feedback by:

- hosting consultations and quarterly meetings throughout the province;
- working closely with seniors and seniors' organizations in their communities; and
- touring seniors' facilities (i.e., housing, long-term care facilities and seniors' centres).

Based on these interactions, the council gives advice to the government on the legislation, policies and programs affecting Alberta's seniors. The council may make resolutions to enhance its own efforts to serve as an effective communication link between Alberta's seniors and the Government of Alberta (see Appendix A for council resolutions).

PUBLIC CONSULTATIONS

In 2007 – 2008, the Seniors Advisory Council for Alberta hosted public consultations in Fort Macleod to explore the range of issues affecting seniors in the region and to consider community-based solutions to the challenges. Twenty-nine representatives of 17 seniors' centres, agencies and other service providers attended the May 22, 2007 workshop. Four elected officials also attended, including Dave Coutts, MLA for Livingstone-Macleod.

TOURS

On May 23, 2007, in conjunction with its quarterly meeting in Fort Macleod, members of the council broke into four groups to tour **11 seniors' centres and seniors' housing facilities** in **Blairmore**, **Claresholm**, **Fort Macleod** and **Pincher Creek**. Council members visited:

- Claresholm Heritage Seniors Centre
- Crestview Lodge (Pincher Creek)
- Crowsnest Hospital (Blairmore)
- Extendicare (Fort Macleod)
- Fred Huddlestun Seniors Drop In (Pincher Creek)
- Macleod Pioneer Lodge (Fort Macleod)
- Porcupine Hills Lodge and Supportive Housing Residences (Claresholm)
- Senior Citizens Welcome Mat (Fort Macleod)
- Vista Village (Pincher Creek)
- Willow Cree Continuing Care Centre (Claresholm)
- York Creek Lodge (Blairmore)

On September 26, 2007, council members toured seniors' facilities in **Fort McMurray**, including the following:

- Northern Lights Continuing Care Centre
- Rotary House assisted living facility
- Golden Years Society

As part of the tour, council met with the MLA for Fort McMurray-Wood Buffalo, Guy Boutilier. Council chair George VanderBurg also met with the mayor of Fort McMurray, Melissa Blake.

PRESENTATIONS TO THE COUNCIL

In conjunction with its quarterly meetings, the Seniors Advisory Council for Alberta invites experts to make presentation on topics of concern to seniors and seniors' service providers. These presentations enhance council members' understanding of the challenges facing seniors and solutions that are working well.

On September 10, 2007, during their quarterly meeting in Edmonton, the council heard from:

- Lora Lea Gaboureau of Alberta Seniors and Community Supports on accommodation standards and licensing for supportive living and long-term care in Alberta; and
- Treena Schmidt of the Alberta Elder Abuse Network on resources and supports for victims of elder abuse and the work of the network.

At the December 10, 2007 quarterly meeting, council heard from:

- Sharon Nettleton and John Cuthbertson on the Calgary Health Region's Patient Safety Committee.

ONGOING CONSULTATIONS WITH SENIORS AND SERVICE PROVIDERS

In addition to the consultations and tours initiated by the council, individual members attended almost 133 other meetings, conferences and events during the year to gather and share information. Appendix A provides a full list of the organizations the council met with during the year.

Business Plan Highlights

The Seniors Advisory Council for Alberta took several actions to increase its effectiveness as part of its strategic business plan. Highlights of the business plan and key accomplishments include the following:

GOAL 1:

To improve focus/work of Council

- **Strategy:** Each council member has an integrated provincial perspective of one or more selected areas of seniors' needs and concerns that she/he can bring to council

  Accomplishment:

  - The council established, and developed terms of reference for ad hoc committees on accommodation, diversity, elder abuse, medical studies, transportation and university studies. The committees will monitor concerns, issues and topics in these areas to support development of advice for policy and activity.

- **Strategy:** Each member has an integrated regional perspective of seniors' needs, and seniors' organizations that she/he can bring to Council.

  Accomplishment:

  - Council members began the process of identifying, and building networks with, the full range of municipal deliverers of seniors' services.

- **Strategy:** A more immediate response by government to seniors' needs as proposed by council is observed:

  Accomplishment:

  - The council is receiving feedback from the Minister re: its advice.

GOAL 2:

To identify and understand successful national and international non-academic programs, services and legislation that will help improve the lives of Alberta seniors.

- **Strategy:** Solutions to seniors' needs, that have been successfully met elsewhere, have been appropriately adapted or recommended to government as solutions to current or potential seniors' issues in Alberta.

  Accomplishment:

  - The council worked with the Seniors Services Division of Alberta Seniors and Community Supports to identify national and international websites relevant to seniors' issues and policies.

GOAL 3:

To improve council credibility

- Strategy: A significantly raised awareness and confidence in council and its work with those stakeholders concerned with seniors and seniors' issues.

  Accomplishments:

  - Council briefed Minister on its business plan.
  - Council members also committed to ensuring ongoing communication with MLAs in their regions.
  - Council began to identify appropriate means to reach stakeholders to ensure their awareness of the work of the council.

Publications

The Seniors Advisory Council for Alberta undertakes research projects, writes and distributes reports. Through these activities, the council ensures communication of timely, accurate information for seniors and seniors' service providers.

During the 2007 – 2008 year, the council produced the following publications:

- ***2006 – 2007 Annual Report***, to the Minister of Seniors and Community Supports. The report summarized: the council's consultations and tours; the presentations made to the council; key challenges and recommendations to the Government of Alberta; communications with seniors and their service providers; Seniors' Week 2006; and the annual budget and expenditures.
- ***Seniors' Centres Funding Report***, a joint product with the Alberta Council on Aging. The report presents the findings from a survey of, and public consultations with, seniors' centres across the province on their financial situation.
- ***Seniors' Centres Funding Recommendations***, a joint product with the Alberta Council on Aging, focused on helping seniors' centres cope with the rising ongoing costs of operating their programs and facilities.

Seniors' Week 2007

Since 1986, the Seniors Advisory Council for Alberta has led the celebration of Seniors' Week. Events throughout the week:

- recognize and honour seniors;
- highlight the positive contributions that seniors are making in their communities; and
- promote healthy attitudes about aging and seniors.

Seniors' Week 2007 focused on the theme "Celebrate Seniors Present and Future Contributions." The council supported community activities through print materials, website information, a special edition of the *Update* newsletter and attendance at numerous events across the province.

A kick-off event at the Calgary Zoo, attended by more than 1,500 people, launched the week. Over 70 communities declared Seniors' Week. There were 245 events, hosted by a variety of organizations and municipalities, posted on the Seniors' Week website.

SENIORS' WEEK PHOTOGRAPHY CONTEST

A new photography contest was introduced in 2007, to capture a visual record of Seniors' Week events across the province. First, second and third place winners were selected by the Seniors' Week Ad Hoc Committee.

- **First place:** Foothills Foundation's Seniors One Act Play Festival
- **Second place:** Three Hills Seniors Outreach Program's collage of Seniors' Week celebrations throughout the town
- **Third place:** Canterbury Foundation's Family Fun Carnival

Summary of 2007 – 2008 Budget and Expenses

	BUDGET	ACTUAL
Salary, wages and employee benefits	$149,000	$141,012
Supplies and services (travel, accommodation, supplies and contracts)	$132,000	$97,078
Other expenditures (MLA fees and expenses)	$15,000	$15,456
Total	**$260,000**	**$253,546**

Appendix A — Meetings, Conferences and Other Events

This Appendix results from council members' commitment to meet with groups or attend events throughout the province during the year. Council members participated in 133 meetings and events in 42 communities.

Communities	Event/Group With Whom Council Met
Bassano	Playfair Lodge and Bassano Hospital — viewing, visit and materials distribution
Blairmore	Crowsnest Hospital — tour
	York Creek Lodge — tour
Brooks	Brooks House Centre — viewing, visit, material distribution and information
	Newbrook Lodge — viewing, visit and material distribution
	Orchard House — viewing, visit, material distribution
Calgary	Alberta Association of Gerontology, Calgary Chapter — Annual General Meeting
	Alberta Association of Gerontology, Calgary Chapter — information session
	Alberta Elder Abuse Awareness Network — material distribution
	Alliance for Active Aging — community forum
	Arbour Lake Seniors Residence — meeting
	Bethany Society — Harvest Hills opening and garden party
	Beverly Nursing Centre — visit and material distribution
	Bowmont Senior Assistance — community information session
	Calgary Catholic Immigration Society — Seniors celebration and Rice Festival
	Calgary Catholic Immigration Services — Immigration International Festivities
	Calgary Catholic Immigration Society — awards celebration
	Calgary Health Region — Patient Safety Council
	Calgary Homeless Foundation — forum
	Calgary Jewish Family Services — new immigrants welcome event
	Chinese Community Association — forum
	Chinook Care Centre — viewing, visitation and material distribution
	City of Calgary — Seniors and the City panel presentation
	City of Calgary Seniors Division — Marlborough Mall fair
	Colonel Belcher Care West — Veterans Week wellness fair
	Deshmesh Culture Centre — Seniors' Week celebration
	Downtown Friendship Centre — annual multicultural fiesta program
	Eldernet Calgary — Fall Fling
	ElderNet Calgary and Alberta Motor Association — meeting
	Father Lacombe Care Centre — viewing, visit and material distribution

Communities	Event/Group With Whom Council Met
	Ghost River Rediscovery — tour and meeting
	Mayfair Care Centre — visit and material distribution
	McKenzie Towne Care Centre — viewing and material distribution (2)
	Millrise Intercare — viewing and material distribution
	Millrise Long Term Care — viewing and material distribution
	Monterey Place — review of programs
	National Seniors Council — update on council
	Peter Coyle Place — official opening
	Seniors' Week Kickoff — Calgary Zoo
	Southwood Nursing Care Centre — viewing and material distribution
	Whitehorn Village — review of programs
Camrose	Alberta Council on Aging — annual general meeting
Carvel	Everglades Lodge and Special Care Home — tour
Claresholm	Claresholm Heritage Senior Social Centre — tour
	Porcupine Hills Lodge & Supportive Living Residences — tour
	Willow Creek Continuing Care Centre — tour
Debolt	MD of Greenview FCSS and Debolt Seniors Centre — workshop and introduction
Drumheller	Drumheller and District Seniors Foundation — viewing and material distribution
	Drumheller Health Centre — viewing and material distribution
	Sunshine Lodge — viewing, visit and material distribution
Edmonton	Alberta Association of Services for Children and Families — meetings (4)
	Alberta Hospital Edmonton — review of programs and facilities
	Alberta Seniors and Community Supports — Seniors Services conference
	Calder Seniors Drop-in Society — needs assessment
	Canterbury Court — Seniors' Week celebration
	Capital Health Edmonton Area — conference on Safety in Home Care, Supportive Living and Long Term Care
	Circle of Chairs — meeting
	Dr. Gerald Zetter Care Centre — Seniors' Week celebration
	Edmonton Seniors Coordinating Council — workshops and roundtable (3)
	Extendicare Sommersett — meeting on licensing standards
	Glenrose Rehabilitation Hospital — Seniors' Week celebration
	Glenrose Rehabilitation Hospital — conference
	Good Samaritan TeleCare Society — information gathering
	Hardisty Nursing Home Inc. — service needs assessment

Communities	Event/Group With Whom Council Met
	North East Community Health Centre — needs assessment
	Polish Canadian Congress — meeting
	St. Michael's Health Group — elder abuse forum
	Seniors Advisory Council for Alberta — business plan meeting (2)
	Seniors Association of Greater Edmonton — meeting
	South Terrace Continuing Care Centre — facility evaluation
Fort Macleod	Extendicare — tour
	Macleod Pioneer Lodge — tour
	Senior Citizens Welcome Mat — tour
Fort McMurray	Northern Lights Continuing Care — visit and facility evaluation
	Wood Buffalo Housing and Development Corporation — facilities evaluation
Fox Creek	Fox Creek Seniors Drop In Centre — introduction
Glendon	Alberta Council on Aging — regional meeting
Grande Prairie	Alberta Seniors and Community Supports — information workshop
Grimshaw	Town of Grimshaw Community Services — workshop
High Prairie	Big Lakes FCSS — seniors lunch
	High Prairie and District Regional Recreation Board — Seniors' Week celebration
	High Prairie Friendship Centre — seniors barbeque
	Pleasantview Lodge and Big Lakes FCSS — provide and gather information
High River	High River Hospital, Medicine Tree Lodge — visit, viewing and material distribution
	Medicine Tree Place — viewing and material distribution
Lamont	Lamont County Community Learning Council and Lamont County FCSS — conference
Lavoy	Vegreville and District FCSS — information session
Lethbridge	Lethbridge City Forum Planning Committee — meeting
	Nord-Bridge Seniors Center — first anniversary celebration
Little Smoky	Little Smoky Seniors — introduction and networking
Mannville	Mannville, Minburn, Innisfree FCSS/ Innisfree Seniors Club – information session
Nampa	Golden Pioneer Drop In Centre — provide and gather information
Nanton	Silver Willow Lodge, Mosquito Creek Foundation — visit, viewing and material distribution
Okotoks	Foothills Foundation — Seniors' Week photo contest award presentation
Peace River	Peace River FCSS — workshop
	Peace River Seniors Club — introduction and gather information
	Town of Peace River FCSS — information fair

Communities	Event/Group With Whom Council Met
Pincher Creek	Crestview Lodge — tour
	Fred Huddleston Senior Drop In — tour
	Vista Village — tour
St. Isadore	St. Isidore — Three Creeks FCSS — provide and gather information
St. Paul	Constituency office — meeting with Minister Ray Danyluk
Sexsmith	Sexsmith FCSS — information fair
Sherwood Park	Apple Blossom Manor — visit and information gathering
	Cloverbar Lodge — visit and information gathering
	Country Cottage — visit and information gathering
	Lakeside Legion Manor — visit and information gathering
	Pioneer Court — visit and information gathering
	Silver Birch Lodge — visit and information gathering
	Strathcona Care Centre — visit and information gathering
Stettler	Pine Ridge and Heritage Housing, Stettler Hospital — Viewing, visit, material distribution
Stony Plain	Meridian Foundation — official opening
Strathmore	Strathmore and District Health Services Continuing Care — visit, viewing and material distribution
	Wheatland Housing Management Body — viewing and material distribution (2)
Three Hills	Three Hills Health Centre — viewing, visit, material distribution and discussions
	Three Hills Seniors Outreach — Seniors' Week photo contest award presentation
	St. Mary's Long Term Care — viewing, visit and material distribution
Toronto, ON	Canadian Association on Gerontology Conference
Trochu	St. Mary's Health Centre, Assisted Living — viewing, material distribution
	St. Mary's Long Term Care — viewing, material distribution
Valleyview	MD of Greenview FCSS/Little Smoky Seniors — introduction and networking
	Willow Lodge — provide and gather information
Vegreville	Vegreville and District FCSS — information sessions
Viking	Viking FCSS — elder abuse forum
Worsley	Worsley Pioneer Club — information fair

Appendix B — Council Members' Biographies

The Seniors Advisory Council for Alberta is a government-appointed body. The chair, a Member of the Legislative Assembly, is appointed by the Premier; other members are appointed by Order-in-Council. They include representatives of the Alberta Medical Association, Alberta universities and the six regions of the province. This regional structure, developed by the Seniors Advisory Council in 1997, maximizes the resources of the council and the location of council members.

Currently, the 15 members of the council are:

GEORGE VANDERBURG, CHAIR

MLA, Whitecourt-Ste. Anne and Chair, Seniors Advisory Council for Alberta.

George VanderBurg was appointed chair of the Seniors Advisory Council for Alberta by the Premier in January 2007. He was elected to his first term as Member of the Legislative Assembly for Whitecourt-Ste. Anne in March 2001 and re-elected in November 2004 and March 2008.

He was appointed minister of Government Services in April 2006 and acting minister of Innovation and Science in August 2006. He held both positions until December 2006.

He has also served on several provincial committees, as the director of the Northlands Park board and as chair of the Electrical Transmission Commission.

Prior to becoming the MLA for Whitecourt-Ste. Anne in 2001, George served for 15 years in municipal politics. He served as the mayor of Whitecourt for almost nine years and spent six years as a town councillor.

Over the years, Mr. VanderBurg, an active Rotarian, and his wife were successful owners and operators of various businesses in northern Alberta. He was president of the Whitecourt Chamber of Commerce and was the recipient of the Chamber of Commerce President's Award. Mr. VanderBurg has also been named Whitecourt's Citizen of the Year and been awarded the Alberta Chamber of Commerce Small Business of the Year Award.

DIANA ANDERSON, MEMBER

Elk Point, North East Region

Diana Anderson has spent most of her career working to improve the quality of life for seniors and to dispel myths about aging.

Ms. Anderson was the president of the Alberta Council on Aging and chaired the policy advisory and health committees. She has also served on the Lakeland Health Authority board and on the steering committee to implement accommodation standards for supportive living facilities.

Ms. Anderson has developed outreach programs for long-term care residents, worked with pastoral care groups and taught post-graduate courses in gerontology. She currently leads a program that brings youth and seniors together.

Her community service was recognized with the awarding of an Alberta Centennial Medal.

Ms. Anderson became a member of the Seniors Advisory Council for Alberta in 2007.

ROSEMARIE BIGGS, MEMBER

Sherwood Park, Edmonton and Area Region

Rosemarie Biggs was a community pharmacist when she started a home visit program for seniors. She used her prescription deliveries as an opportunity to discuss their medications and how to take them properly with seniors.

Her community and professional involvement includes serving as president of the Alberta Pharmaceutical Association in 1996. She was re-elected as the association's president in 1998.

Mrs. Biggs has also spoken nationally and internationally and has received several awards in recognition of her work. The awards include the Canadian Pharmacists' Association's Pharmacist Care of Older Persons Award and the Pride of Strathcona Award for her dedication to patients' well-being.

Ms. Biggs became a member of the Seniors Advisory Council for Alberta in 2007.

DIANE CALEFFI, MEMBER

Calgary, Calgary and Area Region

Diane Caleffi began her career with the Calgary Police Service as an executive secretary in the Field Operations and Tactical Support sections and with Olympic Security for the 1988 Olympic Winter Games. She now runs her own business providing executive and personal assistant services.

She has served as a member of Executive Women International, as a safety officer for Calgary West Little League and as a volunteer with the Calgary Women's Emergency Shelter Turning Points dinners.

Currently, Mrs. Caleffi is a board member with the Calgary Health Region. She is also an advisory member for the Manor at Garrison Woods.

Mrs. Caleffi became a member of the Seniors Advisory Council for Alberta in 2004.

JEAN DREGER, MEMBER

Calgary, Calgary and Area Region

Jean Dreger has worked with many boards and committees to serve seniors. She has been the chair of health and housing on the Mayor's Seniors Advisory Council and a board member for the Calgary Association of Gerontology.

She has volunteered with many other groups including the Canadian Association of Retired Persons advocacy committee and the Elder Friendly Group through the University of Calgary, Faculty of Social Work.

Ms. Dreger also wrote *A Voice for Seniors*, a column in the Calgary Herald, and she is a graduate of the Lutheran Hospital Ministry with a counseling certificate.

Ms. Dreger became a member of the Seniors Advisory Council for Alberta in 2004.

CLYDE ELFORD, MEMBER

Calgary, Calgary and Area Region

Clyde Elford has shared his time with many organizations. He has served as president of several clubs, including the Canukeena Club, Probus Club and Food Executive Club. He has also been a member of the Calgary Naval Veterans Association, Royal Canadian Legion, Kerby Centre, Red Cross and the Calgary White Hatter organization.

He worked with the 1988 Olympic Winter Games volunteer team and has used his public relations and marketing experience to assist organizations like the Southern Alberta Institute of Technology through its advisory board of marketing. Presently, he is a member of the Alberta Mental Health Review Panel.

Mr. Elford has been recognized for his service to the community with the Queen's Jubilee Medal and the Alberta Centennial Medal.

Mr. Elford became a member of the Seniors Advisory Council for Alberta in 2004.

DR. BILL FORBES, MEMBER

Stony Plain, Edmonton and Area Region

Dr. Bill Forbes has worked in a variety of positions with seniors. As a member of a regional health authority, very involved with an education board, and through a variety of associations, he has met many older Albertans and understands their concerns.

Dr. Forbes has also served as president of three Canadian community colleges. In addition to his work with the council, he has volunteered with numerous community, provincial and national not-for-profit associations.

Dr. Forbes became a member of the Seniors Advisory Council for Alberta in 2004.

MAUREEN HEMINGWAY SCHLOSS, MEMBER

Edmonton, Edmonton and Area Region

Maureen Hemingway Schloss has supported many organizations in the Edmonton area, including the Greater Edmonton Foundation as vice-chair.

She has also served on the boards of the Northern Alberta Children's Hospital Foundation, the Alberta Ballet Company and the Edmonton Opera. She is a past president of the Phoenix Theatre, and she chaired the Juno Awards hosting committee.

In addition to volunteering with Meals on Wheels, Mrs. Hemingway Schloss is currently vice-chair of the Government House Foundation and chair of the art committee.

Mrs. Hemingway Schloss became a member of the Seniors Advisory Council for Alberta in 2004.

BEVERLY HOMENIUK, MEMBER

Willingdon, Edmonton and Area Region

Beverly Homeniuk has served on several boards, committees and organizations at district, regional and provincial levels in the Vegreville region.

She has also been an outreach worker with the Vegreville Health Unit, where she developed and implemented visiting programs for the elderly and homebound. Most recently, she served in an administrative position with the provincial government where a large part of her role involved providing support and assistance to seniors.

In 1998, Mrs. Homeniuk was awarded the Northeast 4-H Region Award of Distinction for volunteer leadership, and her family received the Edmonton Northlands/Alberta Motor Association Farm Family Award in 2001.

Mrs. Homeniuk became a member of the Seniors Advisory Council for Alberta in 2007.

LAURIE LYCKMAN, MEMBER

Carmangay, South Region

Laurie Lyckman is very familiar with issues important to seniors, their caregivers and families. Now the director of care for a seniors lodge, she is keenly interested in how best to improve the quality of life of seniors and how to help seniors understand the options and opportunities available to them.

Mrs. Lyckman also helps fundraise for several health foundations and has been an executive member of the Lodge Activity Coordinators Association of Alberta for 13 years.

In 2005, Mrs. Lyckman received an Alberta Centennial Medal for her contributions to the community.

Mrs. Lyckman became a member of the Seniors Advisory Council for Alberta in 2006.

LEONARD OLSON, MEMBER

High Prairie, North West Region

Leonard Olson brings a diversity of experiences to the council. Originally from northern Alberta, he completed his post-secondary education in Edmonton before working with the provincial government and Northern Lakes College.

After retiring, Mr. Olson continued to serve on the High Prairie town council and started to work with Canada Post. He is currently in his fifth term with town council and his second term with the seniors council.

Mr. Olson became a member of the Seniors Advisory Council for Alberta in 2004.

DAWN PARENT, MEMBER

Lacombe, Central Region

Dawn Parent has worked with several organizations, boards and commissions. She has also been a Lacombe town councillor for the past 17 years and has served on the Lacombe Foundation board. Her work with the Seniors and Housing Authority Board and experience caring for aging parents sparked her interest in working with seniors.

After retiring from her account manager position with a national bank, Mrs. Parent entered the real estate sales business, where she continues to work. She is also a board member with the Persons with Development Disabilities Central Region and the Alberta College of Medical Lab Technologists.

Mrs. Parent became a member of the Seniors Advisory Council for Alberta in 2005.

HARJIT S. RAI, MEMBER

Calgary, Calgary and Area Region

Harjit Rai is especially interested in assisting elderly people and believes seniors can be active and healthy community members.

Mr. Rai is also a strong supporter of cross-cultural relations. He served as a director for the Calgary Multicultural Centre and as president of the Sikh Society of Calgary. He remains actively involved with Calgary's Sikh Society and the Deshmesh Culture Centre.

Born and raised in India, Mr. Rai has worked in general insurance, life insurance and real estate fields. He has been a real estate broker in Calgary for more than 20 years.

Mr. Rai received an Alberta Centennial Medal for his commitment to the community.

Mr. Rai became a member of the Seniors Advisory Council for Alberta in 2006.

SENIORS ADVISORY COUNCIL FOR ALBERTA

CONTACT INFORMATION

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